

Deaf Culture Question of the Week – December 10-14, 2012

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Laurent Clerc is known as “The Apostle of the Deaf in the New World.” We are fortunate that Clerc agreed to come to here with Gallaudet. Fate works in strange ways. As it turns out, Clerc was very popular. He had “job offers,” so to speak, from other countries. If “Lady Fate” had turned fickle, what other title might Clerc had been known by?

- a. The Apostle of the Deaf in Germany
- b. The Apostle of the Deaf in South America
- c. The Apostle of the Deaf in the Scandinavian Countries
- d. The Apostle of the Deaf in Russia

Scroll down for the answer.

Answer “d” – Laurent Clerc, “The Apostle of the Deaf in the New World,” might just as easily been known as “The Apostle of the Deaf in Russia.” Before Gallaudet visited Europe and the Institute for the Deaf in Paris Clerc had been offered a position to teach and lead education of the deaf in Russia. He turned this offer down due to financial reasons and unwillingness to leave his family. Russia also may have seemed much more foreign to Clerc. As fate would have it, Clerc developed a relationship with Gallaudet while Gallaudet stayed at his school to study the method of teaching the Deaf via the sign language. He agreed to come with Gallaudet to America. The rest is history. What would have been the path for education of the Deaf had Clerc agreed to go to Russia instead? We will never know.

See the following website for an in depth discussion of the life of Laurent Clerc.

http://www.gallaudet.edu/clerc_center/welcome/laurent_clerc_the_man.html